

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 NEA-10 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 AGR-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

EB-07 FRB-03 H-02 INR-07 INT-05 L-03 LAB-04 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 AID-05 CIEP-01 SS-15 STR-04 TAR-01

TRSE-00 PRS-01 SP-02 FEAE-00 OMB-01 XMB-02 OPIC-03

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FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 379

INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L EC BRUSSELS 00809

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRD, MTN, EEC, EAGR

SUBJECT: EC TROPICAL PRODUCTS OFFER

REF: EC BRUSSELS 728

1. ACCORDING TO BOTH EC COMMISSION AND PERMREP SOURCES, THE IMPRESSION GIVEN BY THE ARTICLE 113 DEPUTIES MEETING ON JANUARY 23, WHEN THE COMMISSION'S TROPICAL PRODUCTS PROPOSAL WAS GIVEN ITS FIRST FULL DISCUSSION, WAS NEGATIVE IN THAT WHAT MAINLY CAME OUT WERE MEMBER STATE CRITICISMS. THIS HOWEVER, AS BOTH OUR SOURCES INDICATED, WAS TO BE FORESEEN, GIVEN THE FORMAT WHEREBY THE LIST OF CONCESSIONS PROPOSED BY THE COMMISSION WAS DISCUSSED ON A PRODUCT-BY-PRODUCT BASIS.

2. THE DISCUSSION OF THE PROPOSED TOBACCO CONCESSIONS WAS NOT ATYPICAL. SEVERAL MEMBER STATES--DENMARK, GERMANY, THE NETHERLANDS, THE UK AND IRELAND--WISHED TO GO FURTHER
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THAN THE COMMISSION PROPOSED. HOWEVER, THEIR PAR-

TICULAR DESIRES FOR LIBERALIZATION DIFFERED. THE UK, FOR EXAMPLE, DOES NOT WANT THE TREATMENT OF INDIAN VIRGINIA TYPE TOBACCO VALUED AT LESS THAN 280 UA PER 100 KILOS WORSENERED FROM THE CURRENT GSP CONCESSION. THE DUTCH CONTINUE TO URGE A PROCESS OF TARIFF SIMPLIFICATION INVOLVING THE ELIMINATION OF THE 280 UA VALUE BREAK. THE GERMANS WANT A SCHEME THAT WILL RESULT IN MORE BLACK TOBACCO COMING IN AT LOW DUTIES. AT THE OTHER END OF THE SCALE, THE BELGIANS AND ITALIANS ARE GENERALLY AGAINST THE COMMISSION PROPOSAL, LEAVING ONLY THE FRENCH FOLLOWING THE COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS, AND THEN NOT 100 PERCENT.

3. THE TROPICAL PRODUCTS PROPOSAL WILL BE DISCUSSED. AGAIN JANUARY 30, THIS TIME BY THE UPPER LEVEL ARTICLE 113 COMMITTEE. IT IS THOUGHT, HOWEVER, THAT FURTHER DETAILED DISCUSSION, AT TWO OR THREE MEETINGS OF THE ARTICLE 113 DEPUTIES, WILL BE NEEDED BEFORE THE PROPOSAL GETS INTO SHAPE. THE INTERNAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE TOBACCO CONCESSIONS WILL ALSO BE DISCUSSED BY THE TOBACCO MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE. WHILE THIS MEANS THAT THE FEB. 9-10 GOAL FOR COUNCIL CONSIDERATION SEEMS ALL THE MORE UNLIKELY, BOTH OUR SOURCES CONTINUE TO BE CONFIDENT THAT THE COMMISSION'S PROPOSAL WILL SURVIVE IN MAJOR PART, INCLUDING CONCESSIONS ON TOBACCO SOMETHING LIKE WHAT THE COMMISSION HAS PROPOSED.

4. A GERMAN PERMREP SOURCE HAS TOLD US THAT BOTH THE FRENCH AND THE COMMISSION HAVE COMPLAINED THAT THE COMMISSION'S PROPOSAL HAS LEAKED TO THE US, AND HAVE REFERRED TO A CONVERSATION WITH A US OFFICIAL IN GENEVA AS EVIDENCE OF THIS. THE CONCLUSION THEY DRAW IS THAT IT IS NECESSARY TO TALK SOON TO THE ACP STATES SO THAT THEY WILL NOT BEGIN TO COMPLAIN OF LACK OF CONSULTATION.
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